



A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED ON

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1776,

By the Rev. Richard Reece, A. B.

IN THE

C H A P E L

OF THE

K I N G ' S - B E N C H.



SERMON

PREACHED ON

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1776.

By the Rev. Richard Reece, A.B.

IN THE

CHAPEL

OF THE

KING'S-BENCH

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PREACHED ON

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1776,

By the Rev. Richard Reece, A. B. *K*

IN THE

C H A P E L

OF THE

K I N G ' s - B E N C H,

IN HONOUR OF THE

R O Y A L F A V O U R,

L A T E L Y G R A N T E D T O

I N S O L V E N T D E B T O R S.

L O N D O N :

Printed (by Desire) by S. AXTELL, No. 30, Cow-Lane, West Smithfield.

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S E R M O N

PREACHED ON

SUNDAY, MAY 20, 1776.

By the Rev. Richard Reece, A.B.

IN THE

C H A P E L

OF THE
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K I N G ' S - B E N C H

IN THE



R O Y A L F A V O U R

FAVOUR GRANTED TO

I N S O L V E N T D E B T O R S

L O N D O N :

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(PRICE 6d.)

A

S E R M O N, &c.

Chap. 8. of the Book of Esther, and Part of the 8th Verse.

*"Write ye, also, in the King's Name, and seal it with the
"King's Ring; for the Writing which is written in the
"King's Name, and sealed with the King's Ring, may no
"Man reverse."*



THE Complexion of the Text was for Jewish Purposes; but as a Royal Ring for Deliverance, a Sceptre, or a Signet, is of Service to any People under disagreeable Circumstances, the Words before us cannot be inapplicable.

The Policy of any Nation cannot be supported but by component Parts, mutually interesting, mutually wanting. To cut off a Part, is to create Imperfection, and, where Imperfection prevails, general Happiness cannot be.

The Wisdom of our Legislature seems, fully, to comprehend this; and, like the great Benevolence of the King of Kings,
A 2 " even

“ even in its Wrath thinketh upon Mercy.” The Inhabitants of this, and of all other Prisons throughout this Kingdom, cannot but acknowledge it ; especially, when We consider what Trials, what Difficulties, what Infamy, we are liable to from the Severity of oppressive Individuals. That Agreements should be fulfilled, that Justice should take Place ; is, both morally and politically, consistent. But, Compacts are not always seen into ; and Justice, is, too often, found to be paralytic. Collusion, and Fraud, frequently get the better of Simplicity ; and Truth itself, with all its Essentialness, too often sinks under the Daringness of Falsehood. To put Things therefore into a right Course, there must be no Immatureness of Judgment, no Sophistry of Argument, no Intention, but what may be productive of Good. To these must be added, Coolness of Temper, Sensibility of Mind, and that most capital Virtue, Patience ; to enable Men to exercise their Faculties with Propriety, and to give Perfection (as far as Circumstances will allow) to the Business they are engaged in. Hastiness of Determination, is inconsistent with National Policy. For sound Policy consults the Good of the whole Community ; but Want of Discretion may overturn Kingdoms.

When a Case comes before a Legislative Body, which is injurious to one Party, and satisfactory to the other, Determination becomes difficult ; because, the positive Law is to do justice to all. The Question then is, whether a greater Good be not preferable to a lesser, if Freedom be superior to Confinement, (for Political Confinement is supposed to be, often, a Good) it certainly should prevail. But Political Freedom is injurious to the aggrieved Party. What then is to be done ? Counterbalancing Powers do nothing at all. A mere Equipoise gives no Distinction : And the Free and the Confined are still at a Stand. If two Opponents

nents cannot agree, let an Arbitrator be called in, and let him determine. But, if this will not do, another Recourse must be had, by appealing to Legislative Power ; which Power (to the Honour of the Nation be it spoken) ever tempers Justice with Mercy. Indeed, Compassion ought to discover itself, when Rigour, Oppression, and Cruelty bid Defiance to every Thing. The Extension of this Compassion, at this Period, eminently distinguishes itself. It beams forth balmy Blessings, with the utmost Liberality. “ Write, ye, also, (says the Voice of Com-
 “ miseration) in the King’s Name, and seal it with the King’s
 “ Ring ; for the Writing which is written in the King’s Name,
 “ and sealed with the King’s Ring, may no Man reverse.”

A Commission this which bids the Heart dance for Joy ; gives the Air of Complacence to the lowering Brow ; and raises the dejected Spirit. But, let us pause a little. Exultation may be ill founded, it may not come from the Heart. The Countenance may smile, when Bitterness is within. I hope no one here comes under this Predicament : But, “ that the Writing,
 “ which is written in the King’s Name,” gives the glow of Satisfaction.

The Legislative Intention, is to take Pity of the Distressed ; to pour Balm into their Wounds ; to restore them to themselves again. The Maxim it sets out upon is divinely originated, and replete with every possible Goodness. Indeed, happy for us it is, that Sympathy operates ; that the Powers of Nature are so consonant, as to excite reciprocal tendencies of Endearment. A Mind capable of refined Ideas, worked up into a proper Tone, cannot be happy, when it beholds Misery in another ; but, how miserable must Happiness itself be, when the grating Hinges of inhospita-
 B ble

ble Doors vibrate on its Ears. The Soul itself startles with Horror, and all its Faculties acquire Languishment. But, the Night of Difficulty and Trouble; the Night of Cruelty and Oppression; she Night of Coldness and Trembling; the long Detail of the black Catalogue of Vices, originating from Idleness and bad Examples, will, I hope, never more be seen, or heard of, within these, or similar Walls. It is an Observation, "That, when once a Passage is open to Iniquity, the Influx of Corruption will force its Way, and deluge the Heart." Whether it be so or not, I believe all of you present can testify.

Knowledge, when, dearly purchased by Experience, has a better Relish with it; it is stamped with the highest Estimation, and admits of no contradiction. A Change of Circumstances has often produced Excellencies; but, Punishment, very often, renders the honest Man vile: A Second catches the Infection, and a general Pollution is the Consequence. 'Tis Policy, if possible, to check this in its first rise, that Generality it may not take Place. What I mean by Punishment, is personal Confinement; for 'tis a Truth, beyond all Contradiction, that Imprisonment, under certain Cases, only teaches a Man to do that with more Cunning, when discharged, than he did with less, before his Difficulties came upon him.

It is to be hoped that political Wisdom will, in Time, be adequate to every moral Purpose. In this Case, I think it is deficient. Every Nation has its Religion, Customs, and Laws; but when a Law operates upon a Subject in such a Manner as to make him totally negligent whether he be useful in his Generation, or not, so in short, whether he even exists; it must be

be highly dissonant to the perfectly moral System. However, let the political Eye penetrate into this Case as Occasion serves.

We have heard the glad Tidings of Joy : “ the Writing which “ is written in the King’s Name, is come down to us.” But, it is not a Joy that consists in a sudden Flash of Exultation, in momentary Bursts of unmeaning Clamour. Noise and Riot, Tumult and Dissipation, sap the very Principles of rational Joy, and darken the Lamp of the Understanding. The Man that is cool within himself ; that wishes to keep the noiseless Tenor of his Way, would thus reason with himself. Long have the Frowns of the World been upon me ; long have I been embarrassed : My Days have been a Series of Misfortunes, and my Nights a Rotation of Uneasiness. Torn from my Habitation by the Rigour of Law, Distraction attended my Affairs, and Ruin became consequent. This added to my Sorrows, and made full the Cup of Bitterness : But let me view the Contrast ; for the Night is far spent, and the Day of my Deliverance is at Hand. For gloomy Confinement I shall have the Sun-shine of Liberty ; for a discontented Mind, I shall be a satisfied Being. My Family Connections will be doubly endearing to me ; the allotted Partner of my Grievs will, now, partake of my Joy ; and the prattling Infant will babble out its Satisfaction at the Sight of its returning Parent.

It may be said, that this is specious, but not forcible ; and that Men, when brought into so deplorable a State, can hardly have a Relish of Joy : And, that from what they have felt, they have no Ideas of doing well again. But let these gloomy Thoughts perish : Let them look up to that Almighty Being, who is the common Father of the World. Man must act : And if he acts
accordingly,

accordingly, "the Hand of the Diligent shall be made fat." Victory is the Reward only of Diligence; triumphal Honours will never grace the Head of Indolence. What ever Impurities may have been contracted, a positive Determination to discard them, will effect the Business.

Legislative Mercy has a glorious Tendency. It wishes the Prodigal to become frugal, the Intemperate to be abstemious: Gives a Scope for the Recovery of forfeited Honour, that you may become Men again. Dissipation it considers as the Bane of the most capital Fortune; and thinks Scantiness a Lesson to bring Men to their Senses. It teaches them to be prudent in their Affairs; to look upon themselves as not despicable Beings, nor as useless Members to the Community at large. But, are not these Blessings which will dignify our Nature, and ennoble the Faculties of the Soul? As the Mind becomes disburthened of its Sorrows, it will be more expansive; and be a more certain Monitor to the Body which possesses it. The first Ideas it should entertain, should be the Ideas of Gratitude and Esteem. "The Writing which is written in the King's Name," is come down for our Relief. Hear this, ye once afflicted People, ye once Sons of Embarrassment hear. Let Strains of Gratitude be sent up to that Throne, where spontaneous Mercy has so lately flown. There, Majesty in all the greatness of Uniformity, considers the Afflictions of the Distressed; and, with Joy mixed with Fondness, bids the Council of the Nation plan a commiserating Scheme. Did he speak? It was done. And, "what is sealed with the King's Signet may no Man reverse."

But, what shall we say of the Royal Partner of his Greatness; whose concentrated Perfections are the Astonishment of the World?

World? An oriental Pen might delineate her Virtues, and represent them to be gloriously great. But, with the most humble Deference, all I can presume, is to pronounce her to be the greatest Blessing that Royal Dignity could ever wish to be connected with. Hail, then, ye illustrious Pair; ye Delegates of Heaven, hail! May Peace be within your Walls, and Pientousness within your Palaces! May Blessings drop upon you as the Dew, and may your Prince's Princes be commensurate with Time itself.

The great Council of the Nation, too, claims our Esteem. Great Deliberation has been us'd, and many prudent Steps taken, to accomplish the Business. Complicated Matters must have Time to be seen into. However, the Event is happy; and, I hope the Sensibility of it will be discovered in a suitable Behaviour on our Part.

Let us quit these Walls with Ideas of Detestation: No Good is to be found within them: Happy be the Hour that gives us Dismission. A modest Deportment; a Mildness of Temper; Reflection arising from Sincerity; that we will be otherwise than we have been; will once more gain the good Wishes of the World, and the Endearment of all our Friends.

Let us, then, put away old Things; let all Things become new! Let the Ideas of revenging the Injuries we have sustained, vanish! Let us cast away the Works of Darkness, and put upon us the Armour of Light! The Day of our Redemption from Bondage draweth near, for Mercy has opened its Gates. Let the Smile of Satisfaction be on every Brow! But, to make our Gratulations quite compleat, let us, to the Praise we have bestowed

flowed upon Men, in one Voice, and with one Consent, breathe forth Hallelujahs to the great King of Kings.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, (be ascribed as is most due,) all Glory, &c.

The Delivery of this to the World, is not from a Confidence of the Virtue of the Peace, but from the repeated Approbation of those distressed Individuals, who, I flatter myself will yet be useful Members to the Community. A Mind that consults its own Good, cannot but wish well to others. I have had my full Portion of Unhappiness in every Shape; and, from Ideas founded upon Experience, have promised once more to indulge my Brother Sufferers (should the World approve of this) to pathetically describe the Word, *Farewell*.



F I N I S.

